

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The present communication is responsive to the Official Action mailed June 7, 2004, finally rejecting all the claims currently pending in the application, namely claims 1, 3-10, 11 and 13-20.

At the outset, applicants note with appreciation the Examiner's well-reasoned response to applicants' arguments in the amendment of March 25, 2004. Applicants particularly appreciate the clarity with which the Examiner set forth his position and the support to which he cites. In view of the Examiner's response and the amendments and arguments set forth below, applicants respectfully believe that all the pending claims are allowable and earnestly request immediate allowance thereof.

In the Official Action, the Examiner objected to claim 4 because of an informality. Applicants have amended claim 4 to correct the informality noted by the Examiner, i.e., replacing the word "member" with --number--. Accordingly, applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the objection.

Claims 1 and 11 have been amended to now recite the structure and step for, respectively, "allocating node identification numbers" to the selected devices. Applicants respectfully submit that the amendment to claims 1 and 11 merely clarifies the claimed subject matter. Accordingly, applicants respectfully submit that the amendment does not constitute the addition of new matter. In any event, support for this amendment may be found by reference to, for example, paragraph [0044] of the written description.

Claims 3, 4, 6, 13, 14 and 16, which either directly or indirectly depend from claim 1 or 11, have been amended to recite proper antecedence to their respective parent claim in view of the amendments to claims 1 and 11. Applicants therefore

respectfully submit that the amendments to claims 3, 4, 6, 13, 14 and 16 do not constitute the addition of new matter.

The Examiner rejected claims 1 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over European Patent Application No. EP 0,853,402A to *Yoshino et al.* ("*Yoshino*") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,333,739 to *Koyama et al.* ("*Koyama*"). For all intents and purposes, the Examiner's rejection of claims 1 and 11 is identical to his rejection of claims 2 and 12 in Paper No. 5 (Official Action of November 26, 2003). In particular, the Examiner states that although *Yoshino* "fails to disclose maintaining said record regardless of whether the selected digital signal processing devices remain connected to the digital interface or not," *Koyama* makes up for this deficiency in *Yoshino*. (Official Action, pg. 4.)

In responding to applicants' arguments in the amendment of March 25, 2004, the Examiner states that "examination of *Koyama*'s teaching demonstrates [] the fact that the node ID value for each of the connected devices is dynamically reassigned each time a bus resetting event occurs is clearly not evidence that registration is not maintained." (Id., pg. 11.) The Examiner also indicated that "the explanation provided in the rejection of claims 2 and 12 provided additional clarification that the unique ID, and not the node ID, of device was the element in *Koyama*'s invention that provided maintaining registration of devices." [Emphasis Added] (Id., pg. 12.) Further still, the Examiner states:

"Simply stated, the fact [that] the Node ID values change following a bus resetting event is no evidence that registration of the connected devices is not maintained. Moreover, the storage of Unique ID values for connected devices in table file 601 and updating the assigned node ID allows PC 104 not only to determine whether a device is connected following a bus resetting event, but further allows PC 104 to communicate

with each of the connected devices in the same manner even though the node ID values are dynamically assigned following a reset event."

[Emphasis Added](Id., pg. 14.)

Applicants and the Examiner are in complete agreement that *Koyama* teaches dynamic re-assignment of node IDs each time there is a bus resetting event, e.g., a user disconnects or adds a new device to the bus. However, in contrast, claim 1, as amended, recites "a register . . . for allocating node identification numbers to said selected devices, for each of said selected devices, said register storing a record of said node identification number allocated to said selected device and maintaining said record regardless of whether said selected device remains connected to said digital interface." As the quoted limitation makes clear, the register of claim 1 allocates "node identification numbers," stores "a record of said node identification number allocated to said selected device," and maintains "said record regardless of whether said selected device remains connected to said digital interface." Therefore, in accordance with claim 1, it is the record of a node ID that is "maintained regardless of whether said selected device remains connected to said digital interface." *Koyama* does not teach or suggest maintaining node IDs.

Indeed, *Koyama* teaches away from the foregoing limitation by requiring "re-assignment" of the node IDs or node identification numbers after each bus resetting event. Therefore, *Koyama* does not make up for the deficiency in *Yoshino*.

Furthermore, inasmuch as claim 11 has been amended to recite a similar limitation as claim 1 with respect to "allocating node identification numbers" and "storing a record of said node identification numbers," applicants respectfully

submit that claim 11 is also not taught or suggested by *Koyama*.

Thus, for at least this reason claims 1 and 11 are not obviated by the combination of *Yoshino* and *Koyama* as *Koyama* does not make up for the noted deficiency in *Yoshino*. In addition, applicants further respectfully submit that the *Horlander* reference (U.S. Patent No. 6,507,953), which is cited against claims 9 and 19, does not make up for the deficiencies in either *Yoshino* or *Koyama*. Therefore, the cited references cannot be combined in any manner to obviate claims 1 and 11.

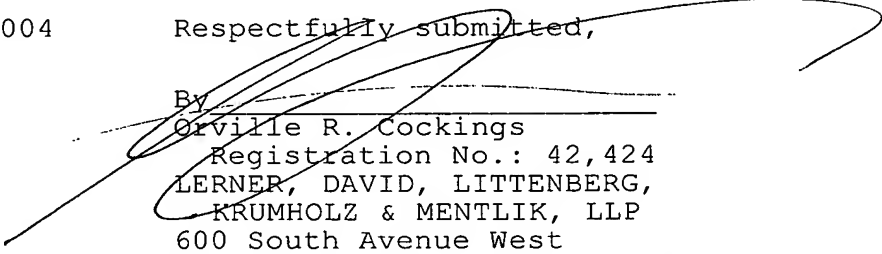
As all the other claims pending in the application depend from either claim 1 or 11, applicants respectfully submit that these claims are also not obviated for at least the foregoing reasons.

In view of the foregoing, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue. If, however, for any reason the Examiner does not believe that such action can be taken at this time, it is respectfully requested that he telephone applicants' attorney at (908) 654-5000 in order to overcome any additional objections which he might have.

If there are any additional charges in connection with this requested amendment, the Examiner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 12-1095 therefor.

Dated: September 2, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

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